ANTIQUARIAN NOTES:

MAINLY OF MEN AND MATTERS

CONNECTED WITH THE

CHURCHES

ON THE ROLL OF THE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

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—o—

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AUTHOR OF

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ETC., ETC.

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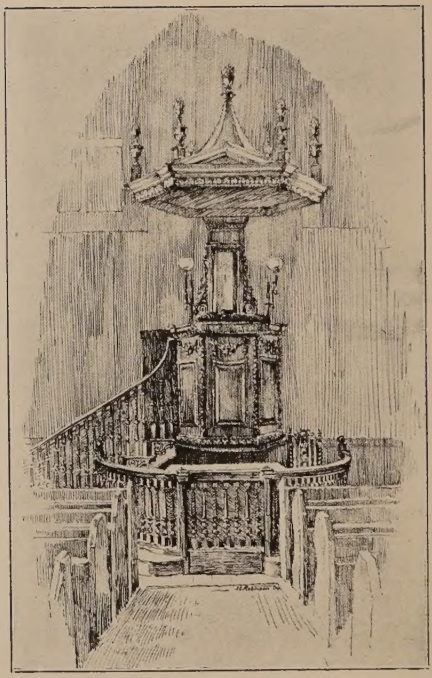


PULPIT AT SHEPTON MALLETT.

Circa 1696.

ANTIQUARIAN NOTES.

1905.

VOL. III. No. 33.

Shepton Mallett.

The pulpit, sounding board, and rails in Cowl Street Chapel are here pictured by Mr. J. C. Robinson, of Marlborough, who has done it for ANTIQUARIAN NOTES. In many respects the pulpit and rails are similar to those in St. Nicholas Street Chapel, Ipswich. The date is probably that of 1696, when the chapel was built. The "Hislop" brass of 1728, on the wall near the pulpit, has already been described.*

* Vol. i., p. 4.

Presbyterianism in Caermarthenshire.

A.D. 1710.

(Concluded from p. 155).

PENCADER. A Chapell to Llan Fihangel Iorwerth.

The Chapell is ruined and most of the stone taken away. There is a Meeting-house erected just by the Church-yard, and a great part of the stones belonging to the Chapell being removed, it was suggested to me while I was there that they were employ'd about the Meeting-house, which by an Inscription carv'd at the west end of it appears to be built in July, 1705.

In this Meeting-house there is a School, and in it the children are taught both the Church and Assemblies' Catechism. The Master is one that Evans of Carmarthen is training up for a Presbyterian Preacher. He has no License. Evans preaches here 3 Sundays in a month, and has a monthly Sacrament. There are about 50 of this Parish come to hear him, and as many from Llan Fihangel Iorwerth. There are sometimes from these and other parishes between 2 and 3 hundred hearers. The room being often so full below and above stairs, that some of the hearers place themselves at the windows.

Families in Pencader are { *16 Landholders* / *19 Cottagers.*

The Meeting-house is seated, the Pulpit made neat, the floor even, and the Gallery decent.

In these particulars it reproaches the Churches in Wales, which lie generally in a very nasty condition. From the advantage the Dissenters have gain'd in this place is seen the necessity of the Chancellor's being put in mind of admonishing Mr. Cobner to residence, with what conscience can he answer undertaking the care of other men's flocks, while he suffers his own to be thus prey'd upon?

A note in its register of baptisms, which begins in 1825, states that the Independent congregation here was founded in 1668.

PENCARREG. The south wall of the Chancel to be repaired, and new pointed, the stonework to be mended at the east end, the upper part of the Chancel wall on the north side swells out so much as to appear in great danger of falling.

No Homilies, no Canons, no Table of Degrees.

No House, no Glebe for the Minister. He lives at Llanybydder, which he holds with this Church by sequestration.

The parishes are contiguous.

Prayers are read every Sunday once.

Here is a Sermon certainly once a month, and now and then twice a month.

The children are sometimes catechized in Lent.

About 50 of the parishioners here frequent the Meeting-house here, without including those that come from Llanybydder.

There are several preachers in their turns at this Meeting, but Evans of Carmarthen is supposed to be the Licens'd Preacher.

Impropriator pays for bread and wine at Easter.

Families about 100.

Poor that can read Welsh about 30.

A short account of this parish appears in the Transactions of the Caermarthenshire Antiquarian Society, 1905, vol. i., var. pp.

TAL-Y-LLYCHAU. Some of the parishioners, when they hear of a strange preacher, go to the Presbyterian Meeting, but for the most part they come to Church, and none of them do constantly frequent the Meeting. Here are two reputed Papists, John Weston and his wife.

TRELECH. Many of the parish, when there is no sermon, go to hear the Presbyterian Preacher at Bettws.

Minister Mr. David Lewis, who is minister also of Llanynio. He is frequently drunk, and so shameless

as to appear at fairs and markets in that condition; he was once in danger of being put in the stocks for drunkenness, but in regard to his function the Magistrate, Mr. Griffith Llwyd, spared him. 'Tis said that complaints have been made of him before the magistrates for attempting to ravish a woman.

The register of the Independent congregation here begins in 1735, the year in which it is said therein to have been founded.

Portraits Wanted.

Mr. Richard Heape, writing from Hall Bank, Rochdale, says:—*I enclose a list—a somewhat long one—of portraits still required for the Rochdale Unitarian Church. I thank you very much for your kind offer of assistance, and if you are able to give an insertion of some sort in* ANTIQUARIAN NOTES *I shall be glad. You will understand, all I want is to have permission to have copies taken of any portraits that may be in existence. Including the Clover Street ministers, I have so far secured twenty portraits, which are in the vestries: it ought not to be impossible to get two or three more of the later men.*

ROBERT BATHE, 1604—1674. Educated at Oxford. Minister at Rochdale.

Henry Pendlebury, 1626—1695. Ed. Christ's College, Cambridge. Ejected from Holcombe; Minister at Bury and Rochdale.

Joseph Dawson, 1667?—1739. Ed. at Rathmell. Minister at Hartford Yorks, and at Rochdale.

Josiah Owen, 1711?—1755. Ed. at Warrington and Caermarthen. Minister at Bridgnorth, Walsall, and Stone, Staff., and at Rochdale.

Thomas Hopkins, —1754. Ed. Caermarthen. Minister at Middlewich, Northwich, and Rochdale.

Richard Bolton. Minister at Rochdale, 1754—1771, then at Monton and Preston.

William Hassall, 1751?—1829. Ed. Warrington. Minister at Rochdale, retired 1776.

Thomas Threlkeld, 1739—1806. Ed. Daventry Academy and Warrington. Minister at Risley and Rochdale.

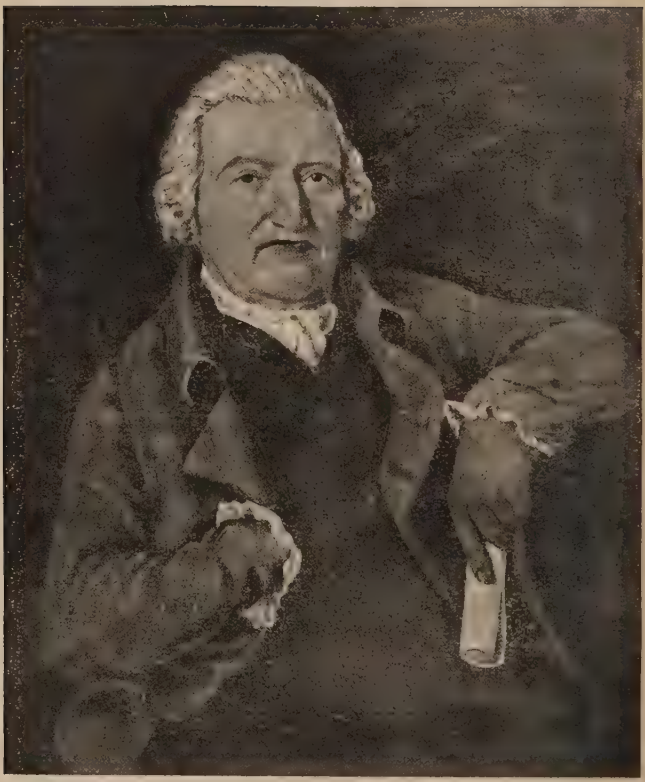
William Marshall, 1776?—1849. Minister at Failsworth, Belper, Rochdale, and St. Albans.

Gilbert William Elliott, 1781?—1847. Ed. Hoxton Academy. Minister at Burton-on-Trent, Coventry (Vicar Lane), Fulwood, Risley, Rochdale, and Prescot.

George Winchester Philp, 1811?—1845. Ed. Manchester College, York. Minister at Brentford and Rochdale.

This list is inserted with pleasure. Will friends write direct to Mr. Heape? The unexpected sometimes happens. The other day one of the wanted portraits turned up at Aberystwyth; the owner, Mr. Edmund Tateham, kindly copied it himself, with the happy result that the face of the Rev. Peter Wright now beams through his spectacles on all who enter the vestry. Ed.

30" × 25".



"DR. BACHE,

I believe these two oil portraits to be both of the gentleman

23″ × 19″.

A BIRMINGHAM PHYSICIAN."

mentioned above, of whom more information is desired.

KENTISH BACHE.

Walford Vicarage, Ross.

"Dr. Bache."

Can anyone help the Rev. Kentish Bache to identify the portraits here given? Please write direct to him at Walford-on-Wye Vicarage, Ross.

LETTER FROM MISS CATHERINE HUTTON TO MRS. COLTMAN, AT LEICESTER.

"Birmingham, Dec. 25, 1780. . . . I have heard nothing of Dr. Bache* since his arrival in Edinburgh. I think the Genius of Physic might have been propitious to him, if he had wooed the damsel earlier in life, as his own genius points that way; but I doubt it now, for I suppose she is like the generality of females, who would reject the addresses of a man of his years. I am glad his prescriptions have been serviceable to you, and I hope that, when he comes out with all the regular qualifications of a physician, such as diploma, periwig, and cane, your opinion of his skill will be so much heightened, that you will come again to Birmingham for his advice.

* A Birmingham physician."

—Pages 27 and 28 of "Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the last Century." Birmingham, Cornish, 1891.

John Foreside.

Of this minister, ejected from Ancroft, in Northumberland, nothing save his name appears in Calamy's Account, 1713, and Continuation, 1727, abridged in Palmer's "Nonconformist's Memorial," first edition, 1775, ii., p. 243. Mention is made of him in a letter to Lord Arlington's secretary, Joseph Williamson, written by Richard Foster from Newcastle-on-Tyne, the 15th October, 1667:—

> There has been a great conventicle of near 200; the churchwardens and some of the mayor's officers went to apprehend or take notice of them, but most of them escaped. The mayor has not above 28 of their names, these he intends to have before him. Their speaker was Farsayd, a suspended minister, a bark (?) man who was taken and brought to church during sermon.

Coventry.

The story of the early days of nonconformity in this city has yet to be told in a manner worthy the name. The Great Meeting-house was built in the year 1700 *with the permission and the blessing of Almighty God.* What was the state of things before that date? To answer that question in part, the following abstracts, as given in the volumes of the State Papers, Domestic, are here recorded. Joseph Williamson, secretary to Lord Arlington, had a correspondent at Coventry, one

Ralph Hope, some of whose letters are amongst the papers in the Record Office. The first reference would seem to be that in the letter of the 11th August, 1667.

> *Dr. Bryan, the quondam minister and a principal bell-wether of the Nonconformists, has resolved to dispense with that oath which entitles him to return, and is accordingly come to town, to the heartbreaking of many of his disciples, the wings of whose charity began to flag, flying such a distance, which is one reason of his return. During his exile, he has been one of the most conformable Nonconformists of the whole gang, it being observed at Coleshill that he has been a very strict and ceremonious observer of the Church, a constant frequenter of service, and has never held nor frequented meetings since interdicted, therefore there is more hope of him than of one that will never be good.*

Writing from Coventry on the 24th February, 1669, Hope says:—

> *The Nonconformists, headed by Eccleshall,* have had meetings at Leather Hall, where Eccleshall preached. The magistrates prevented their having the place last Sunday, but they keep frequent public conventicles.*

Leather Hall was in all probability "the Royally Licensed rooms in Coventry," where John Bryan, D.D., preached the funeral sermon of Obadiah Musson, an

* Probably Joseph Eccleshall, the outed minister of Sedgeley.

aged godly minister of the Gospel. In the following month of March, on the 17th, Hope again writes to Williamson, telling him that—

> *The Nonconformists continue to preach helter-skelter at the Leather Hall, where twice on every Sunday, they have a great confluence, to the depopulating of the Churches.*

On the 3rd April he says:—

> *The Leather Hall meetings make a great noise, and are very much resorted to, and beget great sullenness, and animosity, which, if not regulated, may be of ill consequence.*

His report on the 2nd August is that

> *The meetings have increased since the proclamation, and one held at Leather Hall, was as full as has ever been known, one Eccleshall being the speaker.*

Dr. Bryan's successor as vicar of Trinity Church was Nathaniel Wanley, who, sometime in 1669, sent information to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry that *four conventicles are held every Sunday at Coventry, at Leather Hall, erected purposely therefor, attended by about 700 persons, some of whom affront people going to Church. Dr. Grew, constantly residing in the City, keeps a conventicle twice every Sunday in Much Park Street, St. Michael's parish.*

Nor is this all that Wanley has to say. On the 28th February, 1670, he writes that

The book of Dr. Bryan, the grand Nonconformist minister, lately put forth, entitled "Dwelling with God, or a new Habitation," is making a great noise, and his six sermons therein seem to do the Church more right by their vindication of the Liturgy, and acknowledging and maintaining the antiquity and authority of the Church and episcopacy, than he ever prejudiced it by his Nonconformity. The Doctor is still at Coventry, and is much exclaimed against by his disciples. The conventicles here are quite as numerous as ever, as besides having the grand one at Leather Hall, there are several others in distant places, so that a man, if so disposed, may hear 6 or 7 Sermons every Sunday, and make nothing of it.

Amongst the papers of 1664-5 is an account by Edm. Potter of *Conventicles, fasts and meetings held by the Presbyterians at the houses of Col. Hunt of Shropshire, Mr. Benbow, near Lawrence Lane, London, &c.* In it is another glimpse of Dr. Bryan, as also of other leading men of the period:—

> They boast that they have intelligence of all that passes at Court, and laugh at the three regiments more of horse which the King will raise, boasting that they are assured of 50,000 men in London. Col. Hunt's eldest son keeps 30 horses at Shrewsbury ready for service. Hampden, Baxter, and Dr. Manton often meet to confer at a lord's house 17 miles from London towards Oxford. Col. Hunt has a dinner, called the parsons' ordinary, at his lodging

every Tuesday. Before discovery of the Yorkshire Conspiracy, they boasted that it was carried on so closely that all the wisdom of Council should never disappoint it, and said that Oliver had a quicker scent for discovering a plot than any now have; they are more reserved now, admit none to their meetings but by ticket, and sometimes exclude their daughters and wives. Great persons are requested to leave their coaches and come privately; they make collections often and stave off with gifts those who for poverty are likely to conform, as Dr. Bryan of Coventry. Mr. Calamy has lately had £500 to distribute. Mr. Baxter often preaches at Hampden's House, near St. John's, fitted up on purpose; Mr. Jacom, Mr. Whittaker, and Mr. Poole at the Countess of Exeter's. They advise that all the ejected ministers take their own pulpits again, and see if the people will not stand by them. Mr. Calamy preached every Sunday at his own house, till he was taken ill. Sam Gillibrand, of St. Paul's Church Yard, and Fras. Titon of St. Dunstan's are their booksellers; Dr. Wild is their poet.

Dr. Bryan died on the 4th March, 1675/6, and, says Poole, in his "History of Coventry," 1870, p. 230, "as a funeral sermon was preached in Trinity church, out of respect to his memory, by his successor, the reverend N. Wanley, it is evident that both lived on excellent terms with each other, notwithstanding that Dr. Bryan, possessing, as he did, eminent educational qualifications, occupied himself in the training of congregational ministers, a great number of whom he is said to have sent forth in that capacity."

G.E.E.

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